



**BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
P.O. BOX 725  
FITZWILLIAM, NH 03447  
(603) 585-7723 Fax: (603) 585-7744  
Email: fitzwilliamnh@fitzwilliam-nh.gov

**BOARD MEETING MINUTES**  
**November 14, 2016**

**Selectmen Present:** Susan Silverman, Nancy Carney, Chris Holman

Ms. Silverman called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

**PRIMARY:**

**\*\*\* APPROVE MANIFESTS**

Mr. Holman made a motion to approve the manifests. Ms. Carney seconded. Ms. Carney - Yes, Mr. Holman - Yes, Ms. Silverman - Yes. Approved – 3-0

**\*\*\* REVIEW SIGNATURE FOLDER – The Selectmen reviewed and signed.**

**7:15 MEET WITH MARK STETSON – AVITAR  
- 2017 Re-evaluation**

Mark Stetson and Jon Rice met with the Selectmen to discuss the re-evaluation scheduled for 2017. The Selectmen signed the equalization study that was prepared by Avitar.

Mr. Stetson announced that Avitar was still taking calls until Tuesday. Sam Green and Vicky Ayer from DRA would be here to meet with the Selectmen.

Mr. Stetson reviewed the legislative changes:

Voluntary merger process – need signoff of the mortgage holder if there was one. Still an issue with outstanding taxes – process would delete one of the lots and the Town potentially loses the taxes on that.

Veterans Tax Credit – can adopt to become an all Veterans Tax Credit – provided, however, the person was not receiving the standard credit or the disabled credit. For new applicants applying for the Veterans Tax Credit – would not qualify for both the disabled and veterans.

Solar panels would be assessed. They are adding value. Some towns want to have a solar exemption and some do not. Mr. Stetson just wanted to make the Selectmen were aware of this. If they were to adopt the exemption, residents would have to apply by April 15<sup>th</sup>, if approved at Town Meeting. Mr. Stetson suggested to add the phrase: to exempt the added value. Ms. Silverman asked about a situation where the property owner doesn't own the panels. Mr. Stetson said the property owner would still be responsible for the added value – even when leasing the panels.

Mr. Holman asked about the value. Mr. Stetson stated new panels were an \$800 value per panel. Mr. Holman asked about older panels. Mr. Stetson said they would pay attention to the age of the panels. Mr. Stetson discussed the different solar panels available on the market today. A panel installed 10 years ago wasn't as efficient as a new panel. Mr. Stetson wasn't sure about the statute and whether or not the next property owner would need to reapply. Sam Green shared that a town had a number of old panels and had exemptions. Mr. Stetson stated there was a huge difference between gross cost and net cost and explained the rebate programs. Mr. Holman asked if it was just residential. Mr. Stetson stated it wasn't all properties – if commercial use – don't qualify for the exemption.

Mr. Stetson discussed the State form that was required as part of the update process. Mr. Stetson stated the goals of reassessment was to bring value of properties current as of April 1<sup>st</sup>. The end date of the process was October 1<sup>st</sup> and Mr. Stetson would deliver the completed job, manual, binder, data and full set of cards to the Selectmen. Over the next month or so – they would take live data and maintain in their office. The Selectmen's Office staff would need to keep a list of address

changes and sales. Mr. Stetson shared they would be looking at two years and it looked to be about 60 sales, with 25% at Woodbrook. Mr. Stetson stated the sales at Woodbrook were all over the place and asked if there was a contact there that could assist them in the process. Ms. Favreau shared that she hasn't heard from anyone in a long time. Mr. Stetson shared he knew dock leases were a variable there and there were more docks than Avitar has property assessed. Mr. Stetson asked if we come across a contact for Woodbrook to pass the information along, as it would be helpful.

Mr. Stetson reviewed the information contained on the State form, which was prepared by Avitar on behalf of the Town. Mr. Stetson mentioned the Eversource abatement appeal process. Mr. Stetson reviewed the process and how the value on sales and assessments would be determined.

Mr. Holman asked about wetlands. Mr. Stetson stated it might take time for the market to accept. If something was buildable and was no longer – that would affect the value. Field review of the Town would be done once values have been determined to verify the physical data. Ms. Carney mentioned a secluded property. Mr. Stetson shared it would be helpful if there was information on properties that were accessible only by a 4-wheeler. A preliminary notice was sent out to all of the tax payers. It provided a window of time if they have questions and provides access to their assessment card. Mr. Stetson mentioned the last time they held three days of hearings at the Town Hall. Discussion was held on how taxpayers who don't have internet access could get this information. Mr. Stetson shared it was great to get general information out through the Selectmen's update in the Annual Report. Ms. Silverman shared the Selectmen try to put information out to Town residents in the newsletter. Notices would be sent out sometime next summer. Mr. Green shared if someone wasn't home – they don't know that their property was looked at. Helpful to get this information out there that everyone has been visited whether they know it or not. Mr. Green shared there was State oversight with the process and they would be looking at a random sample of sales to make sure Avitar looked at them accurately. Ms. Silverman asked if there was any way to have the tax map available on-line. Ms. Silverman shared the information on Avitar's website was great. Mr. Green shared it might be helpful to put a pdf of the tax map on the Town's website. Mr. Stetson said the most convenient way would be for it to interface within the software.

Mr. Green would be checking on the work to be done and would be looking at a dozen sales to make sure they were on the cards – look at land sales to make sure they were qualified sales. Mr. Holman asked about the value of property being gifted. Mr. Stetson shared the problem was to determine whether it was a true market value – not reliable. Mr. Green asked Mr. Stetson for his time line. Mr. Stetson replied October 1<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Green shared they were offering a Current Use course in Walpole – try to hold around the State. The course would be held November 29<sup>th</sup> at the Walpole Town Office starting at 9 a.m. and the cost was \$10. Mr. Green handed out and reviewed the brief overview on the assessment review. Mr. Green would come in at some point and go over in more detail with Ms. Favreau. Mr. Green shared that exemption information should be reviewed every 5 years and suggested keeping a worksheet and discussed what it should look like. This information should be kept in a locked cabinet. Mr. Green shared that if someone asked for a list of veterans – in the system – it would only be veteran credits and not a complete list of all veterans. It would be the same if someone asked for a list of all elderly. Mr. Green stated to clarify – need to do a requalification of credits and exemptions – veterans send out an affidavit form. Review forestry stewardships or tree farms - look at the end date and send out a verification letter. Mr. Holman asked about conservation easement on property. Mr. Stetson stated if in Current Use – that's as good as it gets. Mr. Green noted recreational use – can't post – but can post to not allow motor vehicles.

Mr. Green stated they would look at 35 properties around town. Mr. Holman asked about the validation of charitable properties. It was noted that the Selectmen receive a list on an annual basis. Mr. Green and Mr. Stetson gave an example of charitable properties. Mr. Green would notify the Selectmen when they would be out so the Selectmen could put the information in the newsletter.

## **7:45 MEET WITH ROAD AGENT, GENE CUOMO**

Gene Cuomo mentioned the Cemetery Trustees asked if they could store their truck at Meadowood. The Selectmen agreed. Mr. Cuomo shared they also asked to store the benches there as well. Ms. Silverman stated the security wasn't good. Mr. Cuomo stated the Police Department goes there probably twice a day. Ms. Silverman asked who had keys, as she would like consistency for access. Ms. Silverman noted we have town properties and we don't know who has keys. Mr. Cuomo shared he had keys to the property across the street – not the Police Department. Ms. Silverman asked Ms. Favreau and Mr. Cuomo to sort out the keys. Mr. Cuomo stated three sets of keys were made. Discussion was held on access to the back room and to be secured separately.

Mr. Cuomo shared the person doesn't want to pay \$50 for the old garage door and someone else wanted the opener. Mr. Cuomo stated if someone wanted to take it – it would save them from having to take to the Transfer Station. Mr. Holman asked to make the decision and were they available for free. The Selectmen agreed.

Mr. Cuomo asked if the Selectmen wanted the flagpoles installed now or later. The Selectmen asked that they be installed now. Mr. Cuomo asked the Selectmen to talk about the invasive trees in the front of the Town Hall and mentioned at some point they would need to come down. Ms. Favreau shared she was having a hard time getting information from a tree service company. Ms. Silverman stated if we were going to take them down, we need to have a plan for what goes in their place.

Mr. Cuomo shared he got a quote for lights to go in cold storage. The cost was \$1,800 for LEDs and the Highway guys would install. Mr. Cuomo would wait until the end of the year and if he had enough money left he would also purchase electric door openers.

Mr. Cuomo reported the cement logs for the boat ramp would cost \$700 to be delivered. Mr. Cuomo shared that he would borrow a truck and would send someone to get them.

Mr. Cuomo shared the quote he received for a battery for the forklift at the Transfer Station was \$4,800. They worked on the charger and are limping through. Mr. Cuomo mentioned he was doing research on a propane forklift. Mr. Cuomo handed out his CIP requests to the Selectmen to review.

Mr. Cuomo shared with Ms. Silverman that he was unable to meet with the CIP Committee on Thursday. Ms. Silverman stated it was fine. Ms. Favreau shared that \$2,900 was in Capital Reserve and she and Mr. Cuomo had discussed making an Expendable Trust Fund for equipment.

Mr. Cuomo discussed the generator that John Greer would be installing. Mr. Cuomo doesn't know where the transfer switch or the manual was.

Mr. Cuomo reported they were doing tree work, brush cutting, and paving. Ms. Silverman asked about having a shoulder on Richmond Road. Mr. Cuomo shared the road was only 16 feet wide and dropped off because of rocks on the side. Mr. Cuomo stated roads that could be have been shouldered.

Mr. Holman asked about the culvert inventory. Mr. Cuomo shared he would be meeting with SWRPC again and that he has met once already.

The Selectmen thanked Mr. Cuomo for meeting with them.

\*\*\* **SIGN RAFFLE PERMIT**

George Emerson Elementary School would be holding a raffle in February 2017 to benefit the 6<sup>th</sup> grade Ferry Beach trip.

The Selectmen approved and signed.

\*\*\* **REVIEW LETTER FROM TRUSTEES OF THE LIBRARY**  
- **Appointment of Ann McEntee**

Ms. Carney made a motion to appoint Ann McEntee as a Trustee of the Library to serve the remainder of Gail Landy's term. Mr. Holman seconded. Ms. Carney - Yes, Mr. Holman - Yes, Ms. Silverman - Yes. Approved – 3-0

\*\*\* **ELLIOT INSTITUTE APPOINTMENT**  
- **Carolyn Edwards**

The Selectmen approved and signed the appointment of Carolyn Edwards.

\*\*\* **SIGN PROPERTY TAX WARRANT**

Ms. Favreau reported that the warrant was done today and bills would be due on December 22<sup>nd</sup>.

The Selectmen asked that the tax rate be in the newsletter. Ms. Favreau shared that she would be working on the newsletter articles for December.

\*\*\* **REVIEW BUDGETS**  
- **Police Department**  
- **Animal Control**  
- **Recreation**

Ms. Carney shared that there wasn't a lot of discussion on the budgets and they were trying to see if Recreation could come in earlier. Mr. Holman asked about the Animal Control budget.

Mr. Holman mentioned the cost of the speed trailer and wondered if we purchased more than one would we get a discount. Ms. Carney stated the cost was \$7,500. Ms. Silverman shared that CIP would be going over this – only purchase this equipment once – get one with a camera – would be more useful.

Mr. Holman asked about the security cameras at Meadowood. Ms. Carney shared that she didn't know they were still up. Mr. Holman mentioned that someone was there talking about purchasing property. Mr. Holman shared there should be a sign – so we don't get sued over invasion of privacy.

**\*\*\* REVIEW INVOICE FROM SHAHEEN & GORDON**

The Selectmen reviewed the invoice.

**\*\*\* DISCUSS PRIME WETLANDS**

Mr. Holman asked when the next Prime Wetlands meeting would be. Ms. Silverman shared that they were trying to get a hold of the subcommittee.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Holman discussed the uniqueness of the Police Department and the Fire Department in that both have a charity group and asked if they were always volunteering. Mr. Holman asked about the breakdown of hours. Ms. Carney stated there was no mixing of hours. If they have an association event, it was separate and they don't keep hours. Mr. Holman asked if they were using town equipment, even though they are not getting paid – should there be records. Ms. Carney shared they wouldn't know how to do that – there was so many times they are asked. Mr. Holman stated for our own record keeping that should be a step. Mr. Holman asked what non-profits were registered or not – looking at the best non-profit guidelines. Ms. Carney stated the Fire Department doesn't have anything to do with the association. Discussion continued on what information Mr. Holman was looking for, if Fire Department volunteering, if not paid should a record be kept of those hours, and not being sure how to keep track of the amount of time.

Ms. Carney shared it was appropriate to bring up for further discussion. Mr. Holman noted it was creating a distinction between the hours.

Ms. Favreau shared that Charles Koch charged \$75 per hour - included travel time. Ms. Silverman asked if we could meet with Mr. Koch first. Ms. Favreau would schedule a time for Mr. Koch to meet with the Selectmen to review the timber slips. Mr. Holman asked about having a knowledgeable person for this type of work.

Mr. Holman asked to discuss newsletter articles and the December meeting schedule before the meeting was adjourned.

Ms. Favreau shared the following articles would be included in the newsletter: budget committee schedule and their function, holiday schedule, snow obstruction and parking, and the tax rate, which would include the breakdown.

The Selectmen discussed their December meeting schedule and agreed to meet on Wednesday, December 28<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m., as Monday, December 26<sup>th</sup> was a Holiday. Mr. Holman mentioned that he wouldn't be at the December 5<sup>th</sup> Selectmen's meeting.

The Selectmen agreed to meet on Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup> at 1 p.m. for budget discussion. Ms. Favreau shared that department budgets were pretty lean.

**ON-GOING BUSINESS**

Ms. Silverman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:05 p.m. Ms. Carney seconded and the motion passed. 3-0

Submitted by:

Sheryl White  
Secretary to the Board of Selectmen

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Susan Silverman, Chairman

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Nancy Carney, Vice Chairman

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Chris Holman  
Board of Selectmen